

News Advisory



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Public Safety Warning

High Surf, Dangerous Conditions Expected along Coast

A powerful series of storm systems located over the Pacific Northwest will continue to send large westerly swell into the California Coastal waters during the week of December 14th - 18th, 2004, State Park officials announced today.

The first swell should peak on Wednesday and then drop in size on Thursday. High tides of near seven feet that could pose a threat to low lying State Park areas along the coast will moderate in height in the later half of the week.

The most significant of these high surf periods should peak on Friday, December 17th and gradually taper off over the weekend. Many State Park areas along the California coast will see fairly high visitation due to the weather and interest in the waves that are predicted.

VERY DANGEROUS SURF CONDITIONS are to be expected on Friday through the weekend. This will be a very large swell, with a long wave periods. "Park visitors may be fooled into thinking that the waterline is safer than it is due to long lulls between sets of waves," said Alex Peabody, Aquatic Specialist with the State Parks Public Safety Division.

He cautions visitors to avoid exposed beach and rock areas close to the surf line. These areas can seem safe from most breaking waves, but the pattern of breaking waves produces a periodic sequence of large, very strong surges that can wash over rocks and beaches great distances and take visitors by surprise. Watch from a distance, not up close!

"In the interest of public safety, swimming, wading and water sports should be avoided. Popular surfing areas in our state parks will see extreme conditions. Certain state park areas may need to be closed due to the high surf. Please check your local state park office for the updated information and local conditions," said Peabody.

"Be preventative, and be safe out there," he said.

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